

## Young People's Society

### LIFE LESSONS FROM THE PSALMS.

Topic for Sunday, March 7—Life Lessons for me from the Psalms. Psalm 46: 1-11.

#### DAILY READINGS.

Monday: My confessional. Psalm 51.  
Tuesday: My Shepherd. Psalm 23.  
Wednesday: My war-song. Psalm 68: 1-6.  
Thursday: My King. Psalm 2.  
Friday: My Savior. Psalm 22: 1-11.  
Saturday: My home. Psalm 90: 1-12.

The psalter is not a book of praise merely. It is the unburdening of a heart.

As a body of lyrics, it runs through the whole gamut of the human heart-strings as well as of musical expression.

Its beautiful thoughts are not mere poetry, but the cry of the soul, suffering, emancipated, sustained, guided, saved, glorified.

Its exalted expression comes from the profoundest depths of the heart and pulsates with the life of a soul near to its God.

Many of its portions indicate within themselves the occasion on which they were made and the experiences which they were designed to voice.

Others have no such indication directly standing out, but one who is familiar with the life of their author can easily read it between the lines.

The superscriptions to the Psalms are not believed to belong to the inspired original. They suggest, however, the consensus of the world's judgment as to those to which they are attached.

The ascription of Psalms to various authors is quite ancient, but not thought to have been inspired. The Jews have always called those not ascribed to any particular author "orphan psalms."

Some of the titles indicate musical features connected with their use, such as soprano, bass, wind instruments, stringed instruments, or other matters connected with the accompaniment of them when publicly used.

The strange word "selah," found nowhere else except three times in Habakkuk, is now most commonly thought to have been a musical notation, such as our "forte," or "piano," and therefore not designed to be pronounced by the reader.

Those outpourings of soul in which the psalmist acknowledged his sin are among the most pathetic in the records of literature, but they are offset by the richest display of God's grace in pardoning guilt and restoring to favor, through the redemption purchased for man by the Son of David.

The message of Christ runs all through the book. His commission from heaven, his sufferings upon the cross, his power over death and the grave, his resurrection, his intercession, his pleading for man's reconciliation to God, his declaration of wrath against the soul that rejects him, his tender care as a Shepherd, are all richly and clearly declared.

The book is the believer's manual. Every line of it is a promise, a solace or a guide. It is God's thought brought to the level of man, and man's thought lifted up towards the level of God. So rich is it that in all the ages of literature it has been the mine from which poets and scholars have drawn their finest gems. Its thoughts seem to reach up and lay hold upon the eternal.

Walking uprightly, proclaiming the Gospel, dwelling in God's house, accepting deliverance, peace, plenty, protection, guidance, entrance into God's temple, hiding in God, forgiveness, humility, wise numbering of our days, submission and quiet under affliction, patience, our refuge and strength, the omnipo-

tence of God, His triumph over all His enemies, these and a thousand more like them are the precious themes of this thrice precious book.

The growth of the Psalms out of the actual experience of one like ourselves makes them literally ours. We should use and apply them as such. Our Savior was evidently most familiar with them. He quoted from them and applied them, and even once used one of them to confound the people who sought to entrap him with their insidious questions. If we follow and trust him we will love this book that was dear to his heart and whose words were so often on his lips.

## Sunday School

### PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN.

Acts 8: 26-40. March 7, 1909.

Golden Text.—"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." —John 5: 39.

#### SHORTER CATECHISM.

Q. 45. Which is the first Commandment?

A. The first Commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

#### DAILY HOME READINGS.

M.—Acts 8: 26-40.

T.—Isaiah 53.

W.—Psalm 88: 26-35.

Th.—Psalm 119: 9-18.

F.—Luke 24: 13-31.

S.—Romans 6: 1-11.

#### LESSON COMMENTS.

We have in this lesson another of the incidents of the transition period between the existence of the Church almost exclusively at Jerusalem and the beginning of its world-wide work. In the first lesson of the year we saw that Jesus had started his followers upon a campaign of testimony that was to be world-wide. They had been slow in realizing this fact and, beginning with the persecutions that scattered them and sent them "everywhere preaching the Gospel," a number of incidents, of which this is one, served to impress them with the world-wide character of the message that had been committed to them.

I. **Divine Guidance**—vs. 26.—As we saw in the last lesson, Philip, one of the Deacons, went to Samaria to preach the Gospel. His work there was eminently successful and received the approval of the apostles and of the Lord, as witnessed by the coming of the Holy Ghost on the converts. It would seem that this was the place for Philip, but the Lord has other work for him to do. He is directed by an angel to proceed to the south until he reaches the road that goes from Jerusalem down to Gaza. Nothing further is told him, but he starts on the way. That is an act of faith that recalls the faith of Abraham, who "went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11: 8). It is just such unquestioning obedience that brings us to the place of opportunity.

II. **Seeking the Truth**, 27, 28.—Philip strikes the road "from Jerusalem unto Gaza," and his opportunity for continuing and extending the "campaign of testimony" is before him. An Ethiopian eunuch is in the road returning from Jerusalem. He is either a Jew who has been called into the service of the Queen of Ethiopia, or has become a Jewish proselyte. He has been up to Jerusalem to worship, and is plainly a seeker after truth. He is reading the Word of God. His going up to worship and his searching of the Scriptures show that he is clearly a sincere seeker. He is taking, too, the proper course. This will be easily apparent to us if we will ponder Christ's